

PRESS CUTTING
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Furniture sold by major retailers could be unsafe

Sofas and mattresses which are being sold by many of the UK's best-known retailers are 'illegal and potentially lethal', according to a recent BBC 'Fake Britain' TV show.

The show focused on compliance with the UK's fire safety regulations for furniture and followed Leicestershire Trading Standards whilst they conducted a programme of formal testing on samples which were purchased from various high street retailers and independent stores.

The tests revealed that eight out of the ten sofas tested failed either part or all the fire safety tests required under the regulations, which require a product must pass all the relevant tests in order for it to state it is compliant and it is a criminal offence for a furniture supplier not to meet the safety standards.

Pat Barber, Chair of the Association of Independent Inventory Clerks (AIIC) comments: "It is unfortunate that many landlords are ignorant of this major issue with high street furniture. Much if it is imported from around the world may not stand up to stringent fire safe regulations designed to protect homes and occupiers.

"Landlords have a responsibility to provide tenants and properties with the best protection possible. They need to be vigilant when buying sofas, beds, mattresses, and cushion fillings, to



ensure that the items meet fire resistant standards. New furniture must be labelled with a permanently affixed fire safety label that can attest to it meets certain test criteria. Every mattress should have a large blue 'framed' label sewn into the end wall. All upholstered furniture must also have fire safety labels which should read 'complies with the furniture and furnishings (fire) (safety) regulations 1988' and/or 'this item does not require a schedule 3 interliner'. Antique furniture is exempt unless it has been recently reupholstered. Any furniture not showing the appropriate safety label should be removed from a rental property, there are stiff penalties for any landlord in breach of the regulations."